

Apache County – Crooked Nail Trail Planning Meeting  
December 8, 2016 Town of Eagar Town Hall 1 pm to 3 pm

MEETING NOTES

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**Attendees:** Jeremiah Loyd, Debra Seeley, Mel Schweigert, Devin Brown, Trudy Balcom, Ron Shepard, Ben Dugdale, Pam Jaramillo, Bruce Ray, Dave Swietanski, Kyle Trujillo, Jesse Reeck, Doug Wolfe

**AGENDA**

- Alignment
- Public outreach

**Follow up Items from November meeting**

- Adam and Jeremiah will reach out about having a meeting with AZ State Parks/AZ State Land Department to discuss route and grant
  - A meeting is scheduled for December 21<sup>st</sup> in Phoenix with grants and cultural resource staff
  - Discussions will focus on timing/process for cultural survey, grant award and state land ROW
- ***Intergovernmental Agreement***
  - The IGA is going in front of the Apache County board in January (first or second meeting TBD) once new supervisors come on board
    - No issue with the agreement verbage or matching funds
    - Once that is reviewed, it will go back out to the towns

***General Project Discussion***

- Ron and Ben followed up Doyle Shamley, new Apache County Supervisor
  - There are two endangered species Little Colorado Spine Dace and Gosehawk that may be a relevant factor for the River Route
    - Jeremiah/Adam will bring up with state lands
  - There also is consideration of soon-to-be listed species
- Debra updates
  - Land around rest area is not privately owned as previously though
  - Kevin McPhee – interested in the project, would encourage staying away from private land; also concerned about watershed conditions, additional gates
  - Wilbanks – concerned about trail alignment, recreational access – not supportive of access to road across private property north of 4162
- Paleontological survey (Doug)
  - Would encourage that surveying for paleontological resources be included in the request for proposals for cultural survey
- Butterfly easements
  - No automatic easement exists
- Ensuring public compliance/responsible recreation behavior? (Doug idea)
  - Code of conduct process via a permit or stewardship agreement through one of the towns/Apache County? Trying to encourage good behavior

- Dave/Mel – haven't seen many issues with motorized use in regards to resources or impacts to landowners
- Arizona Conservation Corps attended for the first time
  - Statewide organization part of a nationwide network of youth corps
  - Local office based in Pinetop, recruits local youth
  - Primary work:
    - Forest treatments
    - Fencing
    - Trail construction and maintenance
    - Manual work, limited use of equipment
  - Close relationship with State Parks, one of four approved vendors
    - 2017: plan to run sawyer crews in April, general conservation work in early June into Fall
  - Could be a great asset to the Crooked Nail project
- Timeframe for construction?
  - Cultural survey and state land ROW process likely to take 6 to 12 months after alignment is completely
  - Construction likely to be in 2018
  - Work on staging areas, signage, etc could begin before then

## **Alignment Discussion**

### ***Old St. Johns***

- There is an existing Hopi lease to the west of Becker Lake/airport, they will need to be contacted (Chris Chiesl agreed to follow up)
  - Chris not able to attend
- Grover Hill Irrigation Company
  - Devin: substantial work/\$\$ would be needed to put a recreational trail on the side of the alignment
  - Legal considerations – generally acceptable, but some concerns remain about liability
  - Some discussion of limiting recreational access to certain days (i.e. Saturdays)
- St Johns waterline
  - Publically held easement that goes between Concho and St Johns
  - Would need to cross checkboard areas to get to the alignment

### ***River Route***

- Currently the primary route under consideration
- Staging area is owned by Springerville
- The first segment of the River Route is from the Highway 60 rest area to 4162 is entirely on state trust (10 miles)
  - An additional access point/staging area could be developed at 4162
  - Could be a phase of the project that starts earlier if northern segment is challenging
- Landowner relations/concerns – Ben and Debra approached local landowners
  - Ben visited the exit to road 4162 to determine where state trust boundaries are located
    - There may be an overlap of the road easement and the state trust land
    - How to determine public easement of road 4162?
      - By Ben's general measurement it is 30 yards from the centerline to the fence
      - A professional survey is likely to be needed – how to evaluate this investment?

- *Group decision:* A survey is needed; during meeting with ASP and ASLD, will discuss funding survey needs (cost estimate \$600 to \$1000)
  - Debra/Jeremiah will also follow up again with Wilbanks directly about road access.
- Other considerations
  - Coyote Creek = waters of US, which would require a 404 permit and federal environmental analysis
  - Motorized user access to the east side of Lyman Lake/Little Colorado River seems likely – should look at ways through design and info to discourage
  - Rest Area access
    - Need to modify capacity, fencing
    - Adam, Mel will do a site visit to look at needed changes
- River Springs Ranch
  - Public right of ways/easements exist, but the road are not county maintained
    - N roads are publically accessible, but there are some special considerations
    - Some confusion about who owns them and has legal access to this road system (follow up item)
    - The homeowner association does road maintenance
    - Dave S. will look into what public, legal routes are available through this area
  - Other options to the east exist to cross state trust land and avoid the River Spring Ranch completely – preferred option
- Northern staging area
  - Recommendation (Ben D) – have the staging area east on 6040 close to the railroad tracks and avoid the 7 miles on 6040

### ***Easternmost Route***

- Major downsides still exist – connectivity to communities, scenery and recreational interest; cultural resources

### ***Public Outreach***

- Adam is unavailable to attend a January meeting due to a training conflict
- The White Mountain Independent contacted Jeremiah about the project and attended the meeting today – expected to publish a story soon
- Public meeting/planning meeting (i.e. 6pm to 8pm) once a general route is identified and materials can be prepared.
  - Need to have one coordination meeting prior to the public meeting
  - Print maps, with a portion of the meeting open house format
  - ***Group decision:*** public open house will be on March 9, after a preparation meeting in February

**Next meetings: Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup> 1 pm**

**February 9**

**March 9 – Public meeting evening (double check standing Chamber of Commerce meetings for conflict)**

### ***Future Agenda Items:***

- Report back on River Route findings
- Report back on meeting with state departments – parks, state land
- Intergovernmental Agreement
- Plan the March 9<sup>th</sup> public meeting